

Physical Activity & Nutrition Issues for Utah Kids



Fact Sheet

Obesity¹

- Utah's children are following the national trend of unhealthy weights.
- More than 25% of Utah kids are at an unhealthy weight.
- Almost 12% of Utah children are obese, compared to a projected rate of 5%.
- In 2002, 15% of 3rd grade boys in Utah were obese, compared to 7% in 1994. If this trend continues, **34% of 3rd grade boys in Utah will be obese by the year 2010.**

Diabetes²

- Once referred to as “adult onset diabetes,” type 2 diabetes is rapidly increasing among adolescents. **In the United States, approximately 1 out of 3 new diabetes cases is diagnosed in teens.**
- **Obesity is the single most prevalent risk factor for type 2 diabetes.**
- Treating type 2 diabetes in adolescence is difficult because major lifestyle changes are required.

Heart Disease³

- **Heart disease is the leading cause of death and disability for both men and women in Utah.** Poor nutrition is a major risk factor for heart disease.
- **In 2000, the average annual cost for coronary heart disease hospitalization among Utah residents aged 20 or older was \$20,943.** Since then, health care costs for treating heart disease have increased and will continue to do so as the population ages.
- In 2000, a total of 4,148 Utahns died from heart disease.

Oral Health⁴

- **Dental decay is the single most common chronic childhood disease. High sugar content in foods is a major contributor to dental decay,** as are constant eating and drinking throughout the day.
- **More than 50% of 5 to 9-year-old children have at least one cavity or filling. That proportion increases to 78% among 17-year-olds.**
- Children with untreated oral disease suffer daily from **persistent pain, inability to eat comfortably or chew well, embarrassment from discolored and damaged teeth, and learning distractions.**



¹ Utah Department of Health, Bureau of Health Promotion, Cardiovascular Health Program. (2002). Height/Weight Measurement Project.

² Slink, M: Childhood Diabetes: A Global Perspective. Horm Res 2002;57(suppl 1):1-5.

³ Utah Department of Health, Bureau of Health Promotion, Cardiovascular Health Program. (2002). *Cardiovascular Disease in Utah: Milestone Report 2002.*

⁴ Utah Department of Health, Bureau of Health Promotion, Oral Health Program.